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Amendments to the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A system comprising:  
a central processor;  
a non-volatile memory coupled with the central processor and storing platform firmware;  
an extensible firmware interface (EFI) comprising data tables having platform-related information, a loader for an operating system environment, and boot and runtime service calls available to the operating system environment, wherein the EFI enables extension of platform firmware by loading driver and application images, which when loaded, have access to all EFI defined runtime and boot services; and  
a machine-readable boot medium coupled with the central processor, the machine-readable boot medium to be used in initializing the operating system environment for the system upon power up, the machine-readable medium comprising a first set of instructions forming at least a portion of the operating system environment, and a second set of instructions defining one or more firmware extensions to enable the system to access the first set of instructions, wherein the one or more firmware extensions comprise a self-describing media module.
2. (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the machine-readable medium comprises a hard disk platter.
3. (original) The system of claim 2, wherein the one or more firmware extensions comprise a file system driver to support a file system format not supported by the platform firmware.
4. (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the non-volatile memory comprises random access non-volatile memory.
5. (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the central processor comprises a central processing unit housed in a single chip.

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6. (original) The system of claim 5, further comprising:  
a volatile memory; and  
a motherboard coupling the volatile memory, the non-volatile memory and the machine-readable medium with the central processing unit.
7. (previously amended) A self-describing machine-readable medium comprising:  
a first set of instructions in a first portion of the medium defining operations for enabling a machine to access a second set of instructions in a second portion of the medium comprising at least a portion of an operating system stored on the machine-readable medium in a format that is unreadable by the machine before the machine loads the first set of instructions, wherein the first set of instructions comprises at least one extensible firmware interface (EFI) image providing a software abstraction enabling access to the second portion of the medium, wherein platform firmware of the machine does not have a mechanism to access the second portion of the medium prior to accessing the EFI image; and  
the second set of instructions.
8. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 7, wherein the first set of instructions comprise one or more extensions to platform firmware capability.
9. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 8, wherein the portion of an operating system comprises an operating system loader.
10. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the one or more extensions to platform firmware capability comprise a file system driver to support a file system format used to store at least a portion of the second set of instructions.
11. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the one or more extensions to platform firmware capability comprise glyphs that represent a language.

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12. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the one or more extensions to platform firmware capability comprise a Unicode collation module.

13. (previously amended) A machine-implemented method for extending platform firmware capabilities, the method comprising:

loading on a system one or more firmware extensions from a boot media;  
booting the system; and

loading and running an operating system loader from the boot media using the one or more loaded firmware extensions, the one or more loaded firmware extensions enabling the system to access the operating system loader from a portion of the boot media inaccessible to the unextended platform firmware, wherein the one or more firmware extensions are compatible with an extensible firmware interface (EFI) comprising data tables having platform-related information, a loader for an operating system, and boot and runtime service calls available to the operating system, wherein the EFI enables extension of platform firmware by loading application images, which when loaded, have access to all EFI defined runtime and boot services, the system having an EFI architecture.

14. (original) The machine-implemented method of claim 13, wherein loading one or more firmware extensions from a boot media during a system boot comprises using a block input/output protocol to abstract a mass storage device containing the boot media.

15. (original) The machine-implemented method of claim 14, wherein the one or more firmware extensions comprise a file system driver to support a file system format used to store data on the boot media.

16. (original) The machine-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the one or more firmware extensions further comprise glyphs that represent a language.

17. (previously amended) A data processing system comprising:  
means for processing instructions and data;

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non-volatile memory means for storing platform firmware; and  
self-describing mass storage means providing means for extending platform firmware capabilities during system booting before an operating system loader is loaded and run, wherein means for extending platform firmware capabilities comprises an extensible firmware interface (EFI) image residing on the self-describing mass storage means, the image providing a software abstraction enabling access to a second portion of the mass storage means comprising at least a portion of the operating system loader, wherein platform firmware of the machine does not have a means to access the second portion of the medium prior to accessing the EFI image.

18. (original) The system of claim 17, wherein the mass storage means comprises an optical disk.

19. (original) The system of claim 18, wherein the means for extending platform firmware capabilities comprise a file system driver to support a file system format not supported by the platform firmware.

20. (original) The system of claim 19, wherein the non-volatile memory means comprises random access non-volatile memory.